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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/23/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: OLDEST MEMBER OF COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES
CONTEMPLATES CHAIRING FIRST SESSION

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)
AND (D).

¶1. (C) Summary. PolOff and PolFSN met February 22 with new Council of Representative (CoR) member Dr. Abd al-Lateef Abd al-Wahab Hassan al-Bedri. Dr. al-Bedri was the first candidate on the National Iraqi List (Allawi) slate in Salahadin. When PolOff informed him that he appeared to be the oldest member in the new CoR, Dr. al-Bedri expressed surprise adding that he thought Dr. Adnan Pachachi was older. Al-Bedri joked that he would call Pachachi to let him know (NOTE: Adnan Pachachi was reportedly born in 1923, while al-Bedri was born in 1922. END NOTE). When told that, as oldest member, he would preside over the first session of the CoR until the elections of the Speaker and Deputy Speakers, al-Bedri asked, "What do you want me to say?" He added that he did not want to say anything wrong. PolOff responded that the TNA Speaker's Office, Dr. Allawi, and other political leaders would likely be in touch with him before the first session.

¶2. (C) Dr. al-Bedri told PolOff that he was never a Ba'athist and was not sure why he was initially removed from the candidate list by the National de-Ba'athification Commission. (NOTE: Reportedly, the Commission concluded ultimately that al-Bedri might have been the victim of a case of mistaken identity and withdrew its objection to his serving in the legislature.) When asked what CoR committees he would try to join, al-Bedri said he hoped to be involved with health and higher education issues.

¶3. (C) Al-Bedri said he was one of Allawi's professors in the 1960's, and their relationship has continued uninterrupted since then. He told PolOff that he had believed "with all of his heart" that Allawi would do well in the December elections. When asked why Allawi only won 25 seats, he said the election was not honest, mentioning multiple voting, polling station fraud, and shortcomings of the IECI. PolOff said that the International Mission for Iraqi Elections had reviewed the election results, but did not find evidence of massive fraud.

¶4. (C) When asked about the security situation, Dr. al-Bedri said that the situation will get better if extrajudicial killings stop. He added that the Minister of Interior should be replaced, preferably by a Kurd. He said if a Shia is Minister of Interior, that person would be under the "influence of the masses".

¶5. (C) BIONOTE: Dr. Abd al-Lateef Abd al-Wahab Hassan al-Bedri was born in 1922 in Samarra, Iraq. He went to college in Baghdad, and completed his post-graduate studies in the UK and U.S. (Chicago). He returned to Iraq in 1949 and joined the medical college at the University of Baghdad as a professor of surgery. He was briefly imprisoned in 1958 on political charges. He later served as a Minister of

Health in the government of Prime Minister Abdurrahman al-Bazzaz (1965-66) and as President of the medical college from 1971-1972. He was expelled from his position at the medical college by the Ba'athists in 1975. He moved to the UAE where he served as a medical advisor until 1980, and then he went to Jordan, where he served as the dean of the medical school at the University of Jordan. In 1985, he suffered a major heart attack. According to Dr. al-Bedri, King Hussein contacted Saddam Hussein directly and asked for Saddam to let Dr. al-Bedri return to Iraq to be with his family. He was allowed to return, but reportedly not permitted to work. In 2003, he returned to the medical college at the University of Baghdad as a professor of surgery) many of his former students are now on the faculty. He will leave his faculty position once the CoR convenes, but he said he hopes to give guest lectures from time to time.

KHALILZAD